

Eighteen months from an election the available options ...

Published: January 13, 2026, 1:11 pm

There are three things that the UK commentariat seems to agree upon right now. The first is Sunak has given up. The second Starmer has no idea what he is for except expelling the left. The third is no one has any clue who to vote for. They're all true. So what now?

The first thing to agree upon is that there is profound poverty of thought in English politics. Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland all still have people of vision. England has not unless promoting division counts, and I don't think it does.

This leaves voters in three of the four countries of the UK with positive choices that they can make. But it leaves England with no one unless the LibDems determination to return to the EU counts as vision.

I am sorry to say that I did not think it does for one very good reason. Whilst I support the idea, to suggest that reclaiming something that was represents vision for the future seems a little far-fetched to me: there has to be more to it than that.

The Tories have no vision. They have reached the point where most of them cannot imagine their fate beyond the next election. There are only so many jobs at GB News. For the rest of them, the options are bleak. Who would want to employ someone from this failed government?

Labour has, so far, nothing to offer except the statement 'We will have to see how things are when we get into government' as if they are unable to imagine that the answer is 'Just a bit worse than things are now'. Meanwhile, they purge anyone with the ability to think.

And there is little more to say for the Greens. I know where Caroline Lucas is. And I obviously know that the party is far more aware of green issues than anyone else. But what the economics is, I really do not know.

After that, I run out of options, excluding those that the factionalised far right have to offer, and thankfully it is still the case that only a very few people take them seriously.

So, we're stuffed. Eighteen months at most from a general election, and maybe rather less, I have to scramble for any reason to think I might vote for anyone.

So what comes up when I start to scramble? What I realise is that my criteria have to change. They move from what do I want to who is offering anything that might deliver the change I want to see so that we can get out of this mess?

Using that criterion, two options remain, and pretty much for the same reason. I have a choice of LibDem or Green because both support proportional representation voting reform.

Given that this would break the hegemony of Labour and the Tories that is now so utterly destructive, that will do for me as the number one criterion for selection.

The question then comes down to who has best chance of winning where I am within the first-past-the-post system? And that's it.

I am not saying that the resulting choice is completely bleak. But I still have to ask, how did things get this bad? Why is it that politics reached this sorry state? And what price have we paid for it doing so?

It is as desperate a comment on the state of the UK that we have to tolerate Labour and the Tories as options for government as it is on the US that they can only find two quite old men who are apparently capable of running their country.

One day we might have a politics that addresses who we are, where we are, and what we need to do. But that day, it seems, has yet to arrive.